

### REMARKS

The Office Action of March 22, 2007 and the references cited therein have been carefully studied and, in view of the above changes and the following representations, reconsideration and allowance are most respectfully requested.

Applicants first wish to express their appreciation for the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 2-4. Applicants believe that they have made a valuable contribution to the art and the Examiner's recognition of the same is appreciated.

Applicants have amended Claim 1 to include the limitations of Claim 2. Claim 3 has been amended in order to properly depend from Claim 1. Therefore, Applicant believes that Claims 1 and 3-5 are now in condition for allowance.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the Japanese patent to Matsushita. The Examiner states Matsushita discloses a closed loop vacuum cleaner for cleaning a floor surface comprising a foot portion containing an expanded chamber, an intake nozzle, and an outlet nozzle, a managing unit having a handle and support wheels, a motor driven fan, and a filtering means. While Applicants generally agree with the Examiner's description of the invention disclosed in Matsushita, Applicants do not believe that Matsushita discloses or suggests Applicants' invention as it is now being claimed.

Applicants have added new Claim 6-10 in order to more clearly define their invention. Specifically, independent Claim 6 includes the limitations of original Claim 1 and also recites the location of the expanded chamber being after the filtering means and the outlet nozzle where the expanded chamber overlies and is in direct fluid communication with the floor surface being cleaned. This amendment does not include new matter and is fully supported by the

specification as drawings as originally filed. The specification has been amended merely to provide proper antecedent basis for the added claim language.

Matsushita discloses a vacuum cleaner; however, this reference does not disclose or suggest Applicants' invention as it is now being claimed. For example, Matsushita fails to disclose or suggest an expanded chamber that is located after the filter and the outlet nozzle where the expanded chamber overlies and is in direct fluid communication with the floor surface being cleaned. The purpose of Applicants' expanded chamber is to reduce the velocity of the returning air stream and to prevent its escape from underneath the foot portion and into the surrounding area. The location of Applicants' expanded chamber achieves this purpose. Matsushita fails to disclose or suggest such a chamber. Furthermore, the chamber referred to by the Examiner is not in direct fluid communication with the floor surface being cleaned. Therefore, Applicants' claimed invention is neither taught by nor suggested by Matsushita.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that all of the claims clearly and patentably distinguish over the references of record. It is believed that this application is in condition for allowance and an early action toward that end is most respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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